

Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Albany NY
800 AM EDT Tue April 26 2022

...Severe Weather Awareness Week Continues...

Today we review severe thunderstorms.

Severe thunderstorms are defined as thunderstorms with wind speeds of 58 mph or greater and or hail of one inch in diameter or larger. Severe thunderstorms occur most frequently during the warm months and during the afternoon, but happen in all seasons and at all times of the day.

Thunderstorms require moisture, lift and unstable air to develop. Moisture is necessary for the clouds and rain. Lift is usually supplied by warm or cold fronts, sea or lake breezes, mountains or the sun's heat. Lift supplied to moist air in an unstable environment results in the development of thunderstorms. Thunderstorms progress through three stages; developing, mature and dissipating. It is in the mature stage that thunderstorms are usually most dangerous, capable of producing severe weather.

Although the National Weather Service issues warnings for only those thunderstorms expected to meet wind and hail warning criteria, all thunderstorms are dangerous. By definition, thunderstorms contain lightning. If you can hear thunder, you can be struck by lightning. Once you hear thunder, seek shelter immediately in a safe structure. Most lightning fatalities occur when people are caught outdoors. If thunder roars, go indoors.

The National Weather Service issues severe thunderstorm watches and warnings to alert the public to a severe thunderstorm threat. A severe thunderstorm watch means that severe thunderstorms are possible. Continue with your daily routine, but be ready to take quick action should a severe thunderstorm warning be issued. A severe thunderstorm warning means that severe thunderstorms are imminent or occurring. Seek shelter immediately.

Severe thunderstorms can kill and injure, so severe thunderstorm warnings should be taken seriously. In our area, the biggest threat from severe thunderstorms is usually falling trees during high wind gusts produced by the thunderstorms. Also, large hail can break glass so be careful if driving and stay away from windows during a storm. Develop a severe weather safety plan and identify safe shelters where you can go should a severe thunderstorm threaten.

For more information on Severe Weather Awareness Week, go to our web site www.weather.gov/albany or visit us on social media @NWSAlbany. Help us make the United States a weather ready nation by sharing this information with everyone you know.

Tomorrow we take a look at weather safety and preparedness.

NWS Albany